

**Submission Number: NND.001.00681**

**Submission Of: Donald Patterson**

### Your Details

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What is your submission based on? I am making this submission based on my professional knowledge, qualifications or experience or on behalf of a group or organisation

What is your area of professional expertise?

If you are lodging your submission on behalf of a group or organisation, what is the name of the group or organisation?

### Your Submission

In your experience, what areas of the bushfire emergency response worked well?

Response by the Defence Force was professional and well targeted.

In your experience, what areas of the bushfire emergency response didn't work well?

Under resourcing of Volunteers. They need better equipment and improved training.

In your experience, what needs to change to improve arrangements for preparation, mitigation, response and recovery coordination for national natural disaster arrangements in Australia?

There is no National Emergency Legislation. While the States and Territories have disaster/emergency legislation, none exists at the national level. Other first world nations have national legislation eg. US- Stafford Act, Canada- Emergencies Act, NZ, UK. The Australian Government is hamstrung in managing national emergencies, and often needs to wait to be requested by the states to provide assistance. There is a need for National Emergency Legislation that provides the ability to rapidly mobilise national resources ( not just the Defence force, but the full resources of the federal Government) without having to wait for the states to request assistance- (often at the eleventh hour when they realise the situation is beyond their states capacity) and then have the resources immediately available. This needs to be sorted!

Is there anything else you would like to tell the Royal Commission?

The Defence Force is increasingly being called upon to provide assistance during emergencies. Disaster Assistance- Defence Force Aid to the Civil Community (DACC) has well developed procedures, however disaster assistance is not a primary role for the ADF. This should now be reconsidered. If the ADF is to be called upon to provide assistance, then its members need to be trained and equipped for the role. eg Limited Firefighting, Storm Damage/ Sandbagging, Emergency roof repair, etc. There should be specific curriculum/training program the ADF undertake and specific units designated to provide this support. eg Canadian Forces Disaster Assistance Response Team, along with deployable equipment to support the team.

The Commission has the opportunity to help set right our national disaster arrangements. Please don't disappoint.

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